Neahkahnie Mountain, OR

Vicinity Location:
About 65 miles west of Portland, OR near Manzanita, OR.

Directions:
From Portland, Oregon, take Highway 26 west for 70 miles, Near Seaside, take the exit for Highway 101 South. Once on Highway 101 South, drive about 14 miles to Oswald West State park and choose the first parking lot on the right, or the second parking lot, with the restrooms, on the left. The first parking lot will be shaded in the afternoon. For a shorter hike, drive an additional .8 miles to the parking lot for just the Neahkahnie Mountain Trail.

The first three parking lots at Oswald West State Park fill up early on all but winter weekends so plan to arrive by 9am.

No permits are needed to park at the trailhead.

Restrooms and drinking water is available at the main parking lot for Oswald West State Park, .8 mile north of the parking lot for just Neahkahnie Mountain.

Dogs on leashes are allowed on these trails.

Length and Elevation:
Upper Neahkahnie Mountain Trail: 5 miles roundtrip. Lower Neahkahnie Mountain Trail: 2.5 miles roundtrip.
Trailhead elevation: 100 feet.
Parking lot for upper and lower Neahkahnie Mountain Trail: 200 feet, Neahkahnie Mountain: 1420 feet. Highest point 1420 feet.

Trail:
Neahkahnie Mountain Trail (Part of the Oregon Coastal Trail) with connections to Cape Falcon Trail.

Trail Maps:
Topo Map, Oregon State Parks map, Download Garmin .gpx file

History:
Neahkahnie Mountain is made from lava that flowed from Eastern Washington all the way to the ocean about 15 million years ago. These headlands and blocky basalt ridges along this part of the Oregon Coast are remains of those ancient lava flows. In the Chinook language Ne translates to "the place of", so NeahKahNie means "The Place of the Gods."

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From the main parking lot for Oswald West State Park (on the east side of Hwy 101), near the restrooms, walk on the paved trail that crosses underneath Hwy 101 and head along the creek towards the beach. At the large signpost, just to the left of the trail, take the left fork and make your way to the wood plank suspension bridge across the creek.

After crossing the bridge, walk about 200 feet and take the left junction. The trail is small and a bit overgrown and climbs fairly rapidly uphill. There are a few glimpses of the ocean through the forest.

The trail passes through an interesting root-tunnel. This happens when a tree grows on an old stump or log over the trail and eventually the old wood rots leaving an living arch where the old tree once stood.

The trail goes over the top of a viewless, treed knob, and drops down into a big open field of Salmon berries and Salal. From there, it parallels downslope of Hwy 101 for a few tenths of a mile until the trail climbs up and crosses the highway.

This trail crossing is also the alternate starting point for the Neahkahnie Mountain Trail. From the south end of the parking lot, look for the Oregon Coast Trail sign and begin climbing the 2.5 miles up to the top of Neahkahnie Mountain.
The trail switchbacks up the open slope of the mountainside for a bit, enters into the trees, and crosses a small stream. From the stream the trail climbs up the forested slopes. The trail enters a dark section of the forest and loses elevation for the next .25 mile. The highway sounds are replaced by chirping birds and the sound of the wind rustling the trees.

Suddenly you can see the summit to your left and at the same time the trail goes around a corner and breaks out of the trees for a great view of Nehalem Bay to the south. The trail crosses over a ridgeline and enters back into the trees. Pick a spot to leave the trail and take a short climb on one of the user trails on your left up to the top of Neahkahnie Mountain.

From the top are great views in all directions but to the north, which is blocked by trees.

This is safe for small children and pets. The only really steep slopes are near the short climb from the trail up to the summit. There is also an alternate vehicle route available that allows you to drive almost to the summit so expect to encounter people you wouldn’t usually see on the top of a small mountain.

Enjoy the photos!!

Gallery Pics

Switchback Steve